

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 29, 2021

The Honorable Doug Ducey
Governor
1700 West Washington Street
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Governor Ducey:

As representatives of Arizona's southern congressional delegation, we write with our continued concerns over the failure to distribute federal COVID-19 relief funds to local jurisdictions for the purpose of testing its residents for COVID-19.

As you know, Pima County has set up a robust COVID-19 testing system spending more than \$50 million on testing since the pandemic began. With the rise of the Delta variant in Arizona, Pima County has been forced to increase its testing numbers significantly. It is our understanding that the state has declined to reimburse Pima County for its testing operations during peak periods. As you know, testing is a critical component in helping to ease and eventually end this pandemic. Unfortunately, this is not the first time we have raised concerns with your office. Previously, the state declined Pima County's request for \$7.5 million to reimburse testing efforts conducted between December 2020 and January 2021, when cases in Arizona were skyrocketing.

Congress provided \$847 million in Epidemiology and Laboratory Capacity for Prevention and Control of Emerging Infectious Diseases (ELC) for the state of Arizona. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provided guidance for these funds, that reads in part:

*"Direct ELC recipients are strongly encouraged to provide financial resources to LHDs [Local Health Departments] within their jurisdiction by way of a contract or other mechanism(s) that may be available through their health department. In addition to financial resources, directly funded recipients may also provide support to LHDs through offering non-financial resources (personnel, supplies, etc.) to address COVID-19/SARS-CoV-2 testing, surveillance, case detection, reporting, response, and prevention needs at the local level."*¹

Yet it appears only a small portion of these funds have been suballocated to localities in need. We are requesting more information regarding the denial of reimbursement for Pima County's testing operations. Additionally, we are requesting information on the state's intended use of ELC funds moving forward, including what percent you intend to suballocate and any needs, and equity assessments that have been conducted.

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, January). ELC ENHANCING DETECTION THROUGH CORONAVIRUS RESPONSE AND RELIEF (CRR) SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDS. <https://www.cdc.gov/nceid/dpei/pdf/elc-enhancing-detection-expansion-guidance-508.pdf>

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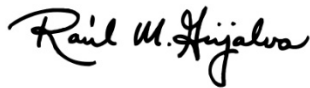
We are deeply concerned that Southern Arizonans are not getting the support from the state they need to combat the pandemic. Pima County has done an excellent job in setting up a robust testing and vaccination operation. We are grateful for their urgent and robust response to this pandemic. Congress appropriated millions of dollars for counties like Pima County for testing resources and we implore you to distribute these funds quickly. We urge you to act more swiftly to distribute Congressionally appropriated funds as intended.

Thank you for your attention to this matter of critical importance. We hope to see more communication between your office, our offices, and Pima County on the distribution of these critical federal funds.

Sincerely,



Ann Kirkpatrick
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress

cc: Don Herrington, Interim Director ADHS
Dr. Richard Carmona, Senior Advisor to Public Health Emergency Preparedness